



Weekly National Security Working Group Update

Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH), RSC Chairman
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The National Security Working Group (NSWG) is comprised of Trent Franks, 2nd, AZ; Connie Mack, 14th, FL; Duncan Hunter, 52nd, CA; Allen West, 22nd, FL and John Fleming, 4th, LA. We look forward to providing RSC members updates on national security issues and matters using this forum. We welcome your inputs.

- IAEA Report on Iran Shows Sanctions Alone are Not Enough (Rep Franks)

The International Atomic Energy Agency ("IAEA") released a report last week that revealed what most already knew: that Iran is well on its way to developing its own nuclear weapons. The IAEA noted that, "while some of the [nuclear] activities...have civilian...applications, others are specific to nuclear weapons." Furthermore, since at least 2003, Tehran has researched computer modeling of nuclear detonations used in developing nuclear warheads and triggering devices for nuclear bombs. This activity contradicts a 2007 US intelligence report that Tehran suspended nuclear weapons research in 2003. The report also names parties that supported Iran's bid for nuclear weapons. Particularly, nuclear-related equipment, materials, and expertise, including warhead designs from Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, assistance from North Korea in conducting computer modeling of nuclear detonations, and meetings with former Russian nuclear scientist Vyacheslav Danilenko were provided to Iran.

President Obama has promised tougher sanctions on the regime to persuade Iran to end its nuclear efforts; however, it is a foregone conclusion that the Administration's policy of appeasement and containment has failed. Sanctions alone have not worked before and will not work now in deterring Tehran's obsession with nuclear weapons. Despite his deceptive rhetoric, Ahmadinejad is fully committed to developing his own nuclear weapons. I believe we will soon be left with only two options: either we accept a nuclear Iran or use every option, including military force, to ensure Iran does not obtain nuclear weapons. While I do not ever want to send our military's men and women into harm's way, for our children's and grandchildren's sake, we must be prepared to strike or face a new age of nuclear terrorism. Unfortunately, I do not see a third option.

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- IAEA Report Highlights Iranian Nuclear Activities (Rep Fleming)

On November 8, 2011, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released a report citing concerns about multiple aspects of Iran's nuclear program, including explicitly weapons-related developments.^[1] In addition to continuing uranium enrichment up to 20 percent U-235 (90% is needed for weapons-grade material), Iran refuses to cooperate with the IAEA and answer questions about activities it has conducted that are crucial for developing nuclear weapons. In the IAEA's most strongly-worded report on Iran to date, it questions the procurement of fast functioning detonators, radiation detection equipment, and neutron generating devices, all of which are critical components for a nuclear warhead. The report also highlights suspicious activities, such as work on hydrodynamic calculations, modeling effects on compression of highly enriched uranium, and testing firing equipment on a test device located down a deep shaft, a traditional way to conduct a nuclear test. All of these procurement and experimental activities point to a clear strategy of pursuing a nuclear weapons program while deceiving the world about its true intentions.

Iran is simultaneously working on developing the means to deliver a nuclear warhead, principally via the Shahab 3 missile. The IAEA report found that Iran has worked on integrating a new spherical payload that would fit into the existing payload chamber of the Shahab 3. It also conducted experiments on a firing system that would allow the payload to detonate high in the air, a feature typically utilized for nuclear and chemical weapons. These revelations are troubling, but align with our intelligence assessments for several years. The IAEA report should serve as a wakeup call for the international community, and convince our allies as well as our adversaries like Russia and China that their security is equally threatened by a nuclear-armed Iran.

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^[1] "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *IAEA Board of Governors*, 8 November 2011.

- Supporting Elections over True Democracy Endangers Long-term Security (Rep Mack)

Modern day “democracies” are often far from democratic. The simple act of holding elections has given nations unconditional authority to corrupt the rule of law and roll back citizen participation in the election process. Case in point: Nicaraguans watched on Sunday, November 5, as President Daniel Ortega was reelected for a third term, despite clear constitutional restrictions on term limits. Independent election observers decried Ortega’s manipulation of the election process, including prohibited governmental financing of his campaign and the disenfranchisement of voters through violence, intimidation, and opaque registration and voting practices. Meanwhile, a heavily U.S. funded organization, the Organization of American States (OAS), called the elections “a step forward” for democracy.

Unfortunately, this particular brand of democracy has become all too common in our region and around the world. Dictators like Ortega, Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez and Cuba’s Castro brothers have eagerly sold their elections as supporting a democratic state with tacit acceptance from the world’s leaders. Refusing to condemn these regimes or even supporting them, as in the case of the OAS, legitimizes and strengthens the very governments who work in opposition to the interests of the United States. The Obama administration should make clear that true democracy requires much more than elections. By not holding these nations and organizations accountable, the United States risks even more governments following in their footsteps.

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- Sequestration of the Defense Budget Will Set Us Back 90 Years (Rep Hunter)

Bad news doesn’t get better with time. If the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction fails, sequestration of the defense budget will reduce the size and strength of the military to pre-WWII levels. The Navy will have the fewer ships than it did going all the way back to WWI. The Air Force will be the smallest it’s ever been in history. The Army and Marine Corps will go below pre-WWII numbers in terms of size of the force. The reality of sequestration is a severely weakened military and consequently, a less secure nation.

With the military having already begun to pay its fair share in terms of cuts required by the Obama Administration and the Budget Control Act of 2011, we are already seeing the consequences of less federal spending on defense. While the Marine Corps waits for the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter, we are now resorting to buying decommissioned Harriers fighter jets and their spare parts from the UK to maintain an aircraft that is no longer in production and nearly 30 years old. When the Army was forced to cancel its Non-Line of Sight Launch System (N-LOS) missile during the Department of Defense efficiencies effort, it also directly impacted the Navy’s Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) surface warfare capability leaving the Navy with a toothless fast-moving frigate. The Air Force has extended the life of its major aviation platforms-B-52, C-130, F-15, A-10-to the point where maintenance associated with aging aircraft has grounded entire fleets of each platform for extended periods of time. Meanwhile, the Army and Marine Corps are fighting to save the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV), their badly needed replacement for the HMMWV, which has been gone well past its service life in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

While the military services struggle to extend their existing platforms, we heard from Secretary Panetta yesterday in a letter to Senators McCain that sequestration would force DoD “to terminate most large procurement programs” which ostensibly would include the JSF, the LCS, the JLTV, and components of the nuclear triad. The future of the military after sequestration is clear. If we add \$600 billion in cuts to the existing \$450 billion already planned, we will severely cripple the most powerful military in the world, hindering our ability to respond to threats against our national interests throughout the globe. The choice is ours. The consequences of inaction will be devastating.

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Each NSWG Item reflects the position and view of the authoring office.

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